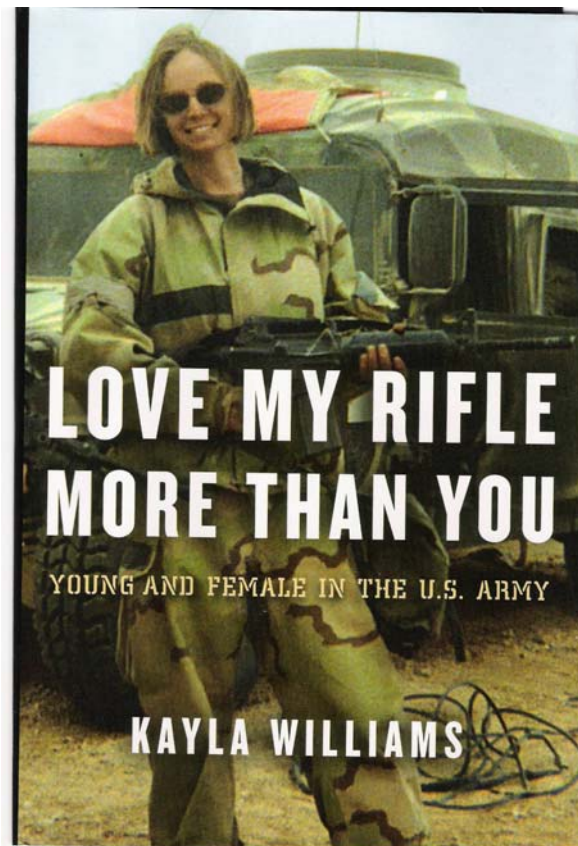


**GI SPECIAL 3D22:**

# HOW TO PREPARE FOR DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ



[W.W. Norton & Co., NYC; 2005 and worth every penny.]

1. Every night until you deploy, sleep in your vehicle. Or sleep on a cot next to your vehicle.
2. Sandbag the floor of your vehicle as protection against improvised explosive devices.
3. Get your semiautomatic rifle and empty a round into the side of your house. And spread gravel throughout the house and yard. For atmosphere.
4. Find the most annoying alarm sound on your cellphone, and set it to go off at least once each night. At different hours.

5. Arrange for neighbors to wait until you are sound asleep then come outside and beam a flashlight into your face. Have them tell you that there's an emergency but then immediately change their mind and announce it was a false alarm.
6. Hire a garbage truck to run all day and all night in your driveway for correct ambient noise. Keep a pit of manure burning for proper fragrance.
7. Practice being physically separated from your spouse or your girlfriend or boyfriend. Communicate with him/her only via cellphone, e-mail, and snail mail.
8. Ask two hundred people you don't know and don't necessarily like to live with you for a month. Make sure there are at least five times as many men as women.
9. When it rains, go dig a hole in your backyard. Fill a pail with dirt and stir it with rainwater. Slowly pour this mixture over your entire body.
10. Once you are good and filthy, use baby wipes to clean yourself. Don't take a proper shower for two weeks. Pretend you don't know what you look or smell like.
11. Handwash some clothes in dusty water only. Mix and match them with sweat-stained and torn clothes. Wear the combined outfits proudly when you meet with your boss or go to a dinner party.
12. Never clean your toilet and be sure always to urinate on the bathroom floor. Remove the toilet paper entirely. Better yet, walk to the bathroom at a gas station at least half a mile away. Always carry heavy equipment, a weapon, and a flashlight.
13. Whenever you feel you have to pass gas, go to the bathroom 'just in case.' Every time.
14. Take your once-every-two-weeks showers in public, preferably on your front lawn; pretend not to notice that people are staring when you strip.
15. Only eat food that has been prepared by strangers, making sure that you never have any idea what it is. Or what's in it.
16. If you drink coffee, be sure to let it sit for several hours before drinking.
17. Drink all beverages—including water, milk, and soda— either lukewarm or very warm.
18. Attach a flashlight to the bottom of your cot. Whenever you want to read or write at night, crawl under the cot.
19. Before you use the telephone, have a family member unplug the phone from the wall so there is no chance you can get through. Attempt to make phone calls anyway. Don't let this affect your morale.
20. Tell your neighbors that every dog on the block may be rabid. Gather up the dogs, shoot them, and burn them.

21. Travel in convoys with your neighbors. Drive very slowly, careful to avoid plastic or paper bags in the road (in case they are explosives). Carry your weapon with you at all times. Point it at anyone suspicious. Stop at every bridge and overpass and inspect them for bombs before driving over them.

22. Travel to the most dangerous neighborhood you can find in an up-armored Humvee. Dig survivability positions with overhead cover. Unroll concertina wire in the streets. Establish checkpoints on every block and tell anyone who wishes to pass through that they will have their vehicles searched upon demand. Tell residents that you are there to improve their situation.

23. Detonate unexploded ordnance in this neighborhood in the middle of the night. If residents are upset, tell them not to worry, things are going according to plan. If they complain that their living room windows have been shattered by the blasts, reassure them and inform them that plastic should work fine. Tell them glass windows were too dangerous, anyway.

24. When your child asks for a ball to play with, have him find the precise one he wants on the Internet, type up a Form 9, attach a printout of the web page, put everything in an envelope mail it to a third party for processing, and tell your child the ball will arrive in just a few weeks.

25. Just when you think you're ready to resume a normal life, do everything on this list again in order to prepare yourself for the unexpected extension of your deployment.

**"I thought this war was probably wrong, didn't want to go.**

**"The lies that got us there, that killed some of us, that wounded and maimed more of us: Only the most messed-up-patriotic-head-up-the-ass-blind-faith-my-country-right-or-wrong soldier believed them." Kayla Williams**

## **IRAQ WAR REPORTS**

### **TWO SOLDIERS KILLED IN MOSUL**

November 22, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND  
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-37C

**BAGHDAD, Iraq – Two Task Force Freedom Soldiers were killed by small-arms fire while on patrol in Mosul Nov. 19.**

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### **II MEF SOLDIER KILLED BY HABBANIYAH IED**

November 22, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND  
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-37C

**CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Soldier assigned to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), was killed in action when his vehicle was attacked with an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations against the enemy in the vicinity of Habbaniyah, Nov. 21.**

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## **Falluja Sniper Kills U.S. Soldier In City Center**

Nov 22, 2005 dpa

**In Fallujah, an insurgent sniper shot dead a U.S. soldier in a patrol in the centre of the city late Monday, policeman Mohammed Ahmed said.**

Ahmed said that U.S. troops retaliated but accidentally injured a civilian in the vicinity of the shooting and arrested six others at the site.

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## **Taji: Attack On Tank Kills Sgt.**

November 21, 2005 U.S. Department of Defense News Release No. 1214-05

**Sgt. Dominic J. Sacco, 32, of Albany, N.Y., died in Taji, Iraq, on Nov. 20, when his M1A1 Abrams tank was attacked by enemy forces using small arms fire. Sacco was assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 13th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Riley, Kan.**

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## **Idaho Soldier Killed In Tal Afar Rollover**

November 20, 2005 Associated Press

BOISE - A 23-year-old U.S. Army sergeant from Idaho died in Iraq when the Humvee he was driving in flipped over, KTVB-TV reported Sunday evening.

Ivan Vargas Alarcon, a 1999 Jerome High School graduate, died last week after being taken to a hospital in Iraq.

His tour of duty was due to end in January, when he planned to return to south-central Idaho's Magic Valley region to open up a car-repair shop, said Maria Crabtree, a family friend, in an interview with KTVB-TV in Boise.

Alarcon, who was with an Army unit based in Georgia, is survived by two sisters, four brothers and his parents.

His body was being transported to the United States on Sunday.

**Including Alarcon, at least 15 soldiers from Idaho have died in Iraq since the U.S. invasion began in March 2003.**

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## **Kearny Soldier Is Killed: “I Don't Know Why They Sent Him Back. I Can't Even Imagine Living Without Him”**

November 22, 2005 By JASON DEL REY, The Jersey JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

KEARNY - A town resident was one of the five U.S. soldiers killed Saturday by a pair of roadside bombs in northern Iraq, his family told The Jersey Journal yesterday.

Staff Sgt. Edward Karolasz, of the Army's 101st Airborne Division 3rd Brigade Combat Team, was killed while on patrol near Beiji, 155 miles north of Baghdad. Five other American soldiers were wounded in the attack.

**Karolasz, who turned 25 less than a month ago, had returned to Iraq in September for his second tour of duty.**

**"He already went one time," his mother, Krystyna Karolasz, said yesterday, choking back tears in the family's dining room as she held a dried rose her son had given her before leaving for his first tour.**

**"I don't know why they sent him back. I can't even imagine living without him," she said.**

His father, also named Edward Karolasz, sat inconsolable in an armchair, too distraught to speak to reporters.

**Karolasz's 26-year-old sister, Kristine Karolasz, said her brother served in Iraq from 2002 through 2003, and was stationed in Kirkuk. He'd told her that his current post near Beiji was "much worse."**

"We were nervous for him, but we never thought this would happen," she said.

He last visited his family in Kearny in May, when he was home for a month.

**Kristine Karolasz said she last heard from her brother a week and a half ago, when he sent her a letter asking her to send flavored coffee, coffee filters and a pillow.**

**"He said, 'I'm tired of sleeping on my towel,'" she said. "But he never got the pillow."**

The Karolasz family was notified of his death when an Army chaplain arrived at their Chestnut Street home Saturday evening, said his sister Donna Karolasz, 24. He is the third soldier from Hudson County to die in Iraq.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been set, the family said.

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## **One U.S. Soldier Killed, Four Wounded At Sidiqiya Bridge**

November 21, 2005 DPA

**Insurgents attacked a convoy of US military vehicles Monday using an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), killing one soldier and injuring another four west of Baghdad, said police sources.**

**A policeman, Adnan Kareem, told DPA that insurgents assaulted a US patrol with an IED at 8 a.m. near Sidiqiya Bridge in Khalidiya, 70 km west of Baghdad, destroying one humvee vehicle. He said the explosion killed one soldier and injured another four.**

The policeman said the victims were seen being moved to Habbaniya base by other US vehicles while the US forces sealed off the region.

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## **EP Marine Dies**

11/21/05 Erica Molina Johnson, El Paso Times

An El Paso Marine was killed in Iraq on Friday, his family said Sunday night.

Lower Valley resident Miguel Terrazas died while serving his second tour in Iraq, his father Martin Terrazas said.

The family was told about his death at 11:15 a.m. Saturday, he said.

**Miguel Terrazas is the second person with ties to El Paso to die in Iraq within a month.**

**Since the conflict began in March 2003, eight soldiers and three Marines from El Paso have died.**

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# **Mosul: 1 U.S. Soldier Dead, 12 Wounded; “And Now I Have To Bury My Child”**



Pvt. Christopher Alcozer, 21, a Fort Wainwright soldier died in Mosul Nov. 19, 2005 (AP Photo)

**Kathleen Alcozer said she opposes the war, which led to "lively discussions" with her son. "But I was always ready to support my child. And now I have to bury my child," she said. "There's just no words."**

November 22, 2005 By SAM BISHOP News-Miner Washington Bureau & November 21, 2005 By ROSEMARY SHINOHARA, Anchorage Daily News

**WASHINGTON--The Fort Wainwright soldier killed during an operation Saturday in Mosul, Iraq, was helping surround an area so other soldiers could search it, according to an Army spokesman who clarified an earlier description provided by the military.**

**Christopher Alcozer, 21, died when his group was hit by small arms fire and hand grenades. Twelve other soldiers were injured, four seriously, but their names aren't being released.**

Maj. Kirk Gohlke said the best information he has indicates that the group was going after a facility where improvised explosive devices were built.

**"I don't know if the operation was successful," he said.**

Alcozer was a member of the 2-1's Company C.

**Alcozer was the fourth member of the Stryker brigade to die in Iraq over the past five weeks.**

Alcozer graduated from high school in 2003 in Villa Park, Ill., a western Chicago suburb. In January, Alcozer joined the Army, which sent him to Fort Wainwright in May.

He played the viola in orchestras and had played football and wrestled in high school.

He proposed to his girlfriend at Northern Illinois University on a recent trip home, his mother, Kathleen Alcozer, told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Alcozer joined the Army because "he said it would make him a man" and felt strongly about serving his country, his mother said.

**Kathleen Alcozer said she opposes the war, which led to "lively discussions" with her son. "But I was always ready to support my child. And now I have to bury my child," she said. "There's just no words."**

**"He fought and died for his country, for the American way of life, and not for the administration," said Adam Alcozer.**

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## Cleveland Marine Killed



11/15/2005 WKYC-TV

CLEVELAND -- Another Cleveland Marine has been killed in Iraq.

The Marine died Saturday in an explosion during combat operations in the Iraqi town of Al Amiriyah.

Twenty-year-old Lance Corporal David Mendez Ruiz was born in Guatemala and came with his family to the United States when he was 6-years-old.

His family said he always wanted be a Marine.

One of his best friends from greater Cleveland Christian school says David was always smiling, and he will miss that.



Mendez Ruiz was one of eight children. This was his second tour in Iraq.

He went back to Iraq on Independence Day of this year and died the day after Veteran's Day.

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## **Haverhill Marine Killed: “He Figured He Had Done His Part”**

November 17, 2005 By Ralph Ranalli, Globe Staff

Lance Corporal Nickolas David Schiavoni joined the US Marine Corps in November 2003, vowing that he was going to "do something with his life," said a cousin, Matthew Schiavoni of Haverhill.

Lance Corporal Nickolas David Schiavoni joined the US Marine Corps in November 2003, vowing that he was going to "do something with his life," said a cousin, Matthew Schiavoni of Haverhill.

Schiavoni also said that his father, Nickolas Schiavoni's uncle, had tried to steer his nephew toward a civilian job.

Or at least, his uncle -- who is himself a US Air Force veteran -- wanted him to turn toward a branch of the service in which he was less likely to see front-line combat.

Nicky, he said, wouldn't have it.

The 26-year-old US Marine, who grew up in Haverhill, was killed by a suicide car bomber in Iraq on Tuesday, according to his relatives and the US Department of Defense.

"He insisted on doing this," Matthew Schiavoni, 38, said of his cousin's joining the Marines. "He said he wanted to do something with honor, to do something for his country."

Schiavoni said that his family had been devastated by the loss and that he had felt particular sorrow for his cousin's widow, Gina, who must now raise their two children, Marissa, 5, and Alex, 3, by herself. The family was living at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

A member of the Second Battalion, Second Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division, Nickolas Schiavoni died as a result of a "suicide, vehicle-borne, improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations against enemy forces near Al Karmah, Iraq," the Defense Department said last night.

His grandfather, David J. Swartz, said Schiavoni died helping another member of his unit.

A sergeant, he said, saw a car that appeared suspicious and went to investigate. Schiavoni and another member of the unit followed in support. The car exploded, killing Schiavoni, he said.

**Family members said that Schiavoni was in his second tour of duty in Iraq.**

**During his first tour, the uncle, James Schiavone said, Nickolas had expressed concern about roadside bombs, particularly because the Humvee he was assigned to was not armored.**

**James Schiavoni said that after the first tour his nephew was not looking forward to the second, but that he loved his fellow Marines "like family" and was unflinching when duty called.**

**"He figured he had done his part," James Schiavoni said. "But when the service says go, you go."**

James Schiavoni remembered his nephew yesterday as a loyal, gregarious young man with dark hair and good looks.

"I once told him: 'You look more like Elvis Presley than Elvis does,' "the uncle said.

Family members said they had been told it would take up to 10 days for the Marine Corps to process Schiavoni's body. They said he would be buried in Massachusetts.

**Nickolas Schiavoni is believed to have been the third US serviceman from Haverhill to have been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan.**

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## **Two Local Soldiers Dead: "He Wanted To Be At Home" "That's All He Talked About, Was Coming Home"**

Nov 18 BY MATTHEW LAKIN, BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

ABINGDON – The knock on the door came twice in Southwest Virginia this week when two area troops – a soldier and a Marine – died a day apart in Iraq.

A roadside bomb killed Staff Sgt. James Earl Estep, 26, of Damascus early Tuesday as he and other soldiers of the Army's 101st Airborne Division drove through the streets of Taji, a suburb of Baghdad, Army officials said.

Halfway across the country the next day, gunfire killed 2nd Lt. Donald Ryan McGlothlin, 26, of Lebanon as he and other Marines fought in Ubaydi near the Syrian border, according to the Department of Defense.

Families began learning the news Tuesday night.

**One local veteran said he couldn't remember the last time two area soldiers died within a day of each other.**

**"It's starting to come home to us," said Emmitt Yeary, president of the Veterans Memorial Fund of Washington County. "And the closer it comes to home, the more the hurt is."**

Other communities have suffered nearly simultaneous losses with the Army's new reliance on local National Guard units, said John Pike, executive director of globalsecurity.org, a Web site that tracks the military. But almost none have involved troops fighting with regular units drawn from around the country.

"That's very unusual," he said.

**Southwest Virginia has lost about half a dozen troops since the war began in 2003 – all from small towns or rural communities such as Damascus, Lebanon or Konnarock. Some areas hadn't seen a death in combat since World War II.**

**McGlothlin was Russell County's first to die in the Iraq war.**

**Estep was the second soldier from Washington County killed in Iraq.**

**Both men attended Holston High School in Damascus and grew up in the shadow of Whitetop Mountain. Both left seeking opportunity in a military career.**

**Close-knit communities tend to produce most of the area's soldiers, Yeary said, and suffer more when one falls.**

**"That's probably where many of our soldiers come from," he said. "People there know more about their family and neighbors. They see them in church on Sunday and get their paper delivered by the boy next door. When you can put a face like that with a name, it hurts harder."**

Communities will begin dealing with that hurt over the next week as the bodies of Estep and McGlothlin come home for burial.

Estep's family plans to bury him in Beatie Cemetery in neighboring Chilhowie.

**"He wanted to be at home," said his brother, Michael. "That's all he talked about, was coming home."**

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## **Patterson Suffers First Casualty**

11.22.05 Tracy Press

PATTERSON — A Patterson native was killed in a convoy accident in Iraq on Friday, becoming the city's first resident to die in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

U.S. Army Pfc. Antonio "Tony" Mendez, 22, was one of two soldiers killed in Kirkut, Iraq, after vehicles in his convoy collided, according to officials from the U.S. Department of Defense.

**He became the 40th soldier from Patterson killed in action and the first local war casualty since the Vietnam War.**

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## **Falluja IED Destroys Military Vehicle: "A Number Of U.S. Troops Were Injured"**

Nov 22, 2005 dpa

A number of U.S. troops were injured Tuesday when a roadside bomb exploded in the city of Fallujah, witnesses said.

The witnesses said the bomb went off in northern Fallujah, 70 kilometres west of Baghdad, as a five-vehicle convoy was passing.

Three vehicles, two civilian and one military, were destroyed in the attack and three civilian bystanders were injured.

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## **Billings Soldier Wounded**

11/22/2005 By the Associated Press

A Billings soldier is recovering in Virginia after a sniper's bullet tore a gash in his forehead while he was on patrol in Iraq.

Army Sgt. Mackay Mathiason, 24, was sitting atop an armored Stryker vehicle searching for a sniper on Oct. 29 when a silver car drove past and a sniper fired through the empty back window.

**The bullet pierced his Kevlar helmet in the middle of his forehead, tore a gash in his forehead and exited his helmet near his right ear. The impact of the bullet caused bruising and bleeding in his brain. Doctors were surprised he survived, said his mother, Julie Mathiason.**

Mathiason was treated in Iraq, Germany and Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He is now recovering in a medical facility in Charlottesville, Va.

He has tremors in his left side and struggles with balance and will need physical therapy, his family said.

While he was recovering he got to hold his newborn son, Noah, for the first time. He and his wife, Leslie, also have two daughters.

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## Bulgarian Soldier Wounded

22 November 2005 Novinite Ltd

**Bulgaria's Ministry of Defense announced that a soldier from the third regiment of fifth infantry division in Iraq has been wounded on Tuesday.**

**At about noon local time, a stray bullet hit private Dyanko Yordanov's left shoulder. The bullet came from the outside of the Echo base, located in the Iraqi province of Diwaniya. [What the fuck is a "stray" bullet? One that just happened to be wandering around in the neighborhood? Gee, it couldn't possibly be a stray sniper, could it?]**

The soldier's life is not in danger, the Ministry clarified, adding that his future treatment has already been arranged.

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## U.S. Military Supply Truck Destroyed: Casualties Not Announced



Burned truck in Baghdad Nov. 21, 2005. The truck was carrying equipment for the U.S. forces when was attacked by a road side bomb explosion on the Dora Highway. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

**OCCUPATION ISN'T LIBERATION  
BRING ALL THE TROOPS HOME NOW!**

## U.S. Military Vehicle Hit In Kan'aan: Casualties Not Announced



U.S. military vehicle hit by roadside bomb in the town of Kan'aan November 21, 2005. (Hilmi/Reuters)

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## OH SHIT



Dignitaries and military personnel take cover after Iraqi insurgents fired mortars at a U.S. ceremony to hand over a presidential palace to local Iraqi collaborators in Tikrit Nov. 22, (AP Photo/AP Television)

11.22.05 AP: Militants were apparently targeting a handover ceremony of a former presidential palace near Tikrit. Several mortars landed close to the palace at a ceremony attended by senior Iraqi and U.S. officials today, but there were no reports of injuries.

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## Sitting Duck: Bring Them All Home Now



Army Spc. Kyle Shelton in Mosul Nov. 10, 2005. The writing on the wall above Shelton reads the Number of the building, 9 and, smoking is not allowed. The writing at right it's a sign indicating the offices inside the building: Accountant, Marketing, Technical department, Payment office, Budget office. [How about: "Ticket Office: Flights To USA. No Waiting"?] (AP Photo/U.S. Air Force, Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.)

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## AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

### U.S. SERVICE MEMBER, AFGHAN KILLED IN IED STRIKE NEAR TARIN KOWT

November 22, 2005 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND  
NEWS RELEASE Number: 05-11-38C

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – A U.S. service member and an Afghan interpreter were killed when their up-armored HMMWV struck an improvised explosive device south of Tarin Kowt today.** They were part of a convoy to re-supply forces conducting operations aimed at defeating enemy forces in the area at the time of the detonation.

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## TROOP NEWS

# The Colonel Knew It Was A Lie: “We Are Not Going To Find Anything.”

Letter To The Editor  
Army Times  
11.21.05

No connection

**A letter writer said that we should show the pictures of the Pentagon, World Trade Center and the hole in the ground in Pennsylvania and then show all the good things in Iraq if we show photos of U.S. war dead [“Show both sides,” Letters, Oct. 31].**

**What does Iraq have to do with the attacks of Sept. 11?**

**Every investigation, every bit of information we have shows that Iraq and Saddam had nothing to do with Sept. 11.**

There were no al-Qaida groups in Iraq before we invaded.

There were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before we invaded.

**As a colonel told me in September 2003 in Qatar as I waited for a transport into Afghanistan, “We are not going to find anything.” He was in charge of a unit looking for WMDs in Iraq.**

So if we are to show photos of Sept. 11, then show them with photos from Afghanistan, not Iraq. The two have nothing to do with each other.

Sgt. Robert Simon  
Minneapolis

**Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.**



# **“The Mission No Longer Made Sense”**

## **“They Don't Want To Do This Anymore”**

November 22, 2005 By Louise Roug, L.A. Times Staff Writer

FORWARD OPERATING BASE FALCON, Iraq — A handful of Delta Company soldiers leaned against a barracks wall the other night, smoking. The subject of conversation: what limb they would rather part with, if they had a choice. On the door of a portable toilet a few feet away, someone was keeping the company death toll amid a scribble of obscenities: five KIA.

"When I first got here, I felt like I could actually do some good for the Iraqi people," Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Barker said. But the last six months had hardened him, he said. "We're not going to change the Iraqis. I don't care how many halal meals we give out," he added, referring to food prepared according to Islamic dietary laws.

Of the 160,000 U.S. troops now in Iraq, some have been deployed to the country for the first time.

**Others are returning for their second or third tours of duty. Those returning find a country that has become even more dangerous.**

**In conversations with troops in the tense cities of Baghdad, Mosul and Tikrit during the last four weeks, morale seemed a fragile thing, especially among those in the line of fire, shot through with a sense of dread.**

Many expressed pride in their mission, and the hope that the budding political process would eventually destroy the insurgency.

But others described a seemingly never-ending fight against an invisible enemy, and the toll of seeing friends die.

**"Morale is a roller coaster," said Lt. Rusten Currie, who has spent 10 months in Iraq. "We were all idealistic to begin with, wanting to find Osama bin Laden and Zarqawi, and bring them to justice — whatever that means. Now we just want to go home."**

Barker remembers the day — it was Sept. 15, a Thursday — that changed how he felt about Iraq.

**Afterward, the mission no longer made sense.**

"It's the most helpless feeling I have ever felt," said Barker, of the California National Guard's 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, who lost his friend and second in command, Sgt. Alfredo Silva, to a roadside bomb that day.

**"We were the walking dead," he said, speaking of the days after the attack. "It was no longer a matter of making it home alive and in one piece. Just alive would be fine."**

**After that day, the explosions never seemed to stop. In Delta Company, morale plummeted after four men were killed in nine days, Barker said.**

In the mess hall at Forward Operating Base Falcon, just south of Baghdad, soldiers on crutches precariously balanced food trays and sodas as they hobbled among the rows of tables. There were other, invisible injuries — backs and legs refusing to heal.

**Many soldiers have been struck by explosives repeatedly — three or four times — since arriving at Falcon base this year. The medics call them "frequent fliers."**

Delta Company soldiers have had trouble sleeping.

**"One of my buddies, he's also a gunner," said Spc. Evan Bozajian, 23, from Inglewood. "In the beginning, he was really gung-ho. Not anymore. Some of the guys, they hate it. They don't want to do this anymore."**

Bozajian, however, still thinks he's doing something worthwhile.

"Back home, there are a lot of issues about why we're here — if it's because of the oil," he said. "I don't even care about that."

When he's "gunning," politics disappear, he said.

**"If I die — if my truck gets blown up — there's one less bomb for the 4-year-old to walk on."**

**Bozajian has been hit three times, the last time in August. Two and a half months later, he still hadn't recovered. Despite the crutches, walking was painful.**

While Barker and his men in Baghdad were hit by roadside bombs, Spc. Jose Navarette stood in a tower, peering into the darkness.

Behind him in a palace complex built by ousted dictator Saddam Hussein in Tikrit, 42nd Infantry Division troops slept next to their packed bags. Navarette would be one of the last Americans to stand guard there. A few weeks later, the palace complex would be handed over to Iraqi officials.

On this night, Navarette watched the lights of Hussein's hometown still sparkling past midnight. Memories returned and his thoughts drifted as the Tigris River flowed by below his perch. This had been his world for 10 months in Iraq — a 6-by-6-foot guard tower.

Thousands of miles away, at home in Odessa, Texas, his youngest son finished kindergarten and began his first day of school while Navarette guarded the palace. The 26-year-old regretted lost moments with his young family.

The Iraqi kids who came begging, barefoot in ragged clothes, made him think of his own, three boys and a girl, unable to understand what their dad was doing in Iraq.

"All they see is what's on TV," he said. "They always ask, 'Did you kill someone?'"

But for Navarette, Iraq had been more contemplation than battle. In the guard tower, the war was almost an abstraction. While thousands of Iraqis and Americans were getting killed elsewhere, he watched life on the river — children swimming, their parents washing their cars by the water's edge.

**Occasionally, Navarette talked about politics as he shared night watch with other soldiers.**

**"This whole war is like a modern-day Vietnam," he said. "You see more people dying every day. That makes you wonder if it's worthwhile."**

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## **Same Old Same Old: “Soldiers He Knew Weren't Informed Adequately About Applying For VA Benefits”**

November 20, 2005 By William Cole, Advertiser Military Writer

Hawaii's citizen soldiers returning from Iraq and Kuwait face a whirlwind demobilization and a raft of uncertainty as they seek old or new jobs, reintegrate into families who've survived without them, and deal with issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

The challenges may equal those faced overseas.

**Lisa Nisenfeld, executive director of the Workforce Development Council in Washington state, recently testified before a Senate panel that when 4,500 National Guard soldiers returned to that state from Iraq, they were changed in more ways than one.**

**Those who worked low-wage, low-skill jobs, for example, were no longer satisfied with them.**

**"During their deployment, they learned many technical skills (and) lived in intense and demanding situations," Nisenfeld said. "They developed maturity unlike that of others their age."**

Expectations for work and family changed substantially, Nisenfeld said, yet the soldiers often came home to minimum-wage jobs, debt, changed family situations, and physical and mental challenges.

"So they're given three weeks or less to decompress prior to entering civilian life," she said.

Staff Sgt. Vernon De Soto, 33, a reservist who served with the 411th Engineer Battalion for a year in Iraq said jobs were a big concern for returning soldiers, as were medical benefits.

**De Soto said soldiers he knew weren't informed adequately about applying for VA benefits.**

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## **IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP**

### **Assorted Resistance Action: Scratch One Checkpoint**



The wreckage after a car bomb exploded against an army checkpoint in Kirkuk. (AFP/Marwan Ibrahim)

November 21, 2005 By Antonio Castaneda, ASSOCIATED PRESS & November 22, 2005 AP & Radio Free Europe & dpa & Sapa-AFP & Reuters & Aljazeera

**KIRKUK, Iraq Insurgents lured Iraqi a police patrol by shooting one officer Tuesday then having a suicide car bomber drive up to the scene and detonating his vehicle while the investigation was underway, killing 12 more.**

Police Capt. Farhad Talabani said the bombing took place on a road leaving Kirkuk, 290 kilometers (180 miles) north of Baghdad.

**In another bombing in Kirkuk, a suicide bomber blew himself up in a marketplace. Police rushed to the market after a small bomb exploded there. A bomber then drove in at speed, ramming a police car with his vehicle and setting off a large explosion.**

**Many of the police officers, were burnt to death according to police Brigadier General Adel Zein al-Din.**

**KERBALA - Three security guards were killed by armed fighters in al-Ghadeer, 10 km (6 miles) west of Kerbala, a police source said.**

**RAMADI - Three policemen were shot dead by armed fighters in Ramadi, 110 km (68 miles) west of Baghdad, a police source said.**

**In Tarmiyah, four policemen were killed and another wounded by resistance fighters.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE END THE OCCUPATION</b></p>
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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**

# ***Operation Raw*** **From The Days When U.S. Soldiers Rebelled And Stopped A War**

**By Joe Urgo, GI antiwar activist in Vietnam 1968**

Letters To The Editor

Revolutionary Worker, April 9, 1985

**It was Labor Day weekend 1970 — the end of summer when tradition in America is for friends and family to gather in back yards, beaches, and parks.**

**It was 10:30 a.m. in Doylestown, Pennsylvania and a company of infantry swept into town, seized and occupied the center of the city, setting up roadblocks and taking civilian prisoners.**

Anyone fleeing was killed, the rest were tortured and then killed just for being there. The younger women were particularly manhandled and abused before being killed. At 10:45 a.m., once again on alert, the company marched south of the town, leaving a trail of bloody bodies and survivors standing in their yards and streets, mute with shock, unbelieving eyes fastened on the departing soldiers. Leaflets lay in the streets which said:

**“A U.S. INFANTRY COMPANY JUST CAME THROUGH HERE.”**

“If you had been Vietnamese:

—We might have burned your house.

—We might have shot your dog.

—We might have shot you.

—We might have raped the women.

—We might have turned you over to your government for torture.

—We might have taken souvenirs from your property.

—We might have shot things up a bit.

—We might have done all these things to you and your whole town.

“If it doesn’t bother you that American soldiers do these things every day to the Vietnamese simply because they are ‘gooks,’ then picture yourself as one of the silent victims. Help us to end the war before they turn your son into a butcher. . . or a corpse. Signed Vietnam Veterans Against the War.”

With No Business As Usual Day fast approaching (and coming by coincidence right before the tenth anniversary of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam), I thought it was just the right time to recount this political action carried out by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

**This was Operation RAW (Rapid American Withdrawal), a four-day simulated, 90-mile search-and-destroy mission through eleven rural towns and villages from Morristown, New Jersey to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.**

**By the end of four days 125 veterans and a few active-duty GIs had formed four platoons and two recon squads to reenact thirteen “incidents” like described above.**

It was “theater,” but these reenactments brought home a powerful political statement that shook up the stultifying atmosphere in the middle-America towns which had largely escaped the mass upsurges of the time.

Formed in 1968 to lobby, this was VVAW’s first breakout action to bring the war home. As Scott Moore, a member of its executive committee, said at a press conference: “The

time for talk has come to an end for VVAW. We have been talking for three years to no avail. We are now proceeding on a course of action.” The discussion of planning leading up to it had asked the questions of how to break through the normal business as usual protests that had been going on, to shake things up and expose the truth.

**“Montgomeryville, PA., September 6, 1500 hours: We liberated a shopping center. The platoon surrounded it front and back and we took seven prisoners from the crowd. We interrogated them, then beat the shit out of them. After they’d been executed, we carried one girl who looked like she was fourteen over to the side of the road and mauled her with the butts of our rifles. Blood streamed down her head and soaked her torso. Maybe 150 cars passed by. Everyone looked, then turned aside. They didn’t look again. No one stopped. They couldn’t stand to look at the bloody little kid” (excerpt from the Camden, NJ Courier Post reporting on the demonstration).**

A local guerrilla theater company agreed to play the townspeople in the prearranged skits; towns and roads were mapped in advance so that as the company surrounded a home or a village — with walkie-talkies screaming and vets running all over the place, blood capsules bursting on library steps in front of meat stores — there was a sense of realism in the air as America’s safe hamlets were invaded. There could be no business as usual today.

**Though their rifles were toy props, most of the vets were not acting.**

**In a few cases they had been doing this for real only a short time before, and in several “incidents” they went right to the edge of reality in carrying out their mission.**

In town after town, and once by a county fair, homes were mock-burned, free fire zones formed, hostages taken for interrogation, and onlookers were given a taste of what the Vietnamese people were forced to live with.

None of the audience liked being called “round-eyed gooks,” offended by the sharp language of the leaflets being handed out. Reactions ranged from disbelief and shock to embarrassed laughter to damning U.S. involvement to some who thought the uniform was being disgraced.

Local communes and peace groups met the vets at different points with banners, signs, cars honking, fists out of windows. On September 5 this march met up with and camped with 60 members of the offshoot of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference called MAN, Making a Nation, who were themselves marching to the UN to protest American failure to sign the antigenocide bill.

The tempo picked up as the march neared the end and word spread of this “forced raid into America.” The vets themselves got strong in their determination to see it through. At night the campsites were not drunken beerfests but preparation of another type — political discussion over what was the next step, what should our objectives be, how to reach out to the millions of vets and GIs out there trying to figure this out also.

**This was sharp as there was a wide range of opinion — some were just basically opposed to Americans dying, with much discussion about the nature of**

imperialism, while others were revolutionaries working for the defeat of America. (All this with rotating night patrols on the perimeter -- — the campsite owners had been threatened by a local citizens committee, a car had tried to run someone down and a shotgun had been pointed out the window of a home along the route of march.)

The two sharpest points agreed to were (1) a series of objectives that drew the links between the racism and sexism to what America did around the world and that VVAW work toward getting all American soldiers and CIA out of every country in the world, and (2) a specific call to prepare for a series of war crimes investigations — the famous “Winter Soldier” hearings — to “place the blame where it properly belongs, on administration and military officials and all those who dictate policy and remain silent or profit from war.”

As one vet summed up his feelings about the weekend: “the spirit that we would never again fight *for* America — America was the enemy that had to be stopped, that we were fighting as part of and for a different world — this became real on the march for me and became a guide for many vets later on.”

By the last day, spirits were high as the vets encountered a last bit of opposition — a pitiful display of what America has to offer — the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion, and John Birch Society denouncing the vets for not being vets and calling people to god and country.

The vets laughed at this as they reached Valley Forge, Pennsylvania where they formed up on a hilt, single file along the top, “rifles” up for a final assault. They moved down the hill as if back in Vietnam sweeping through a rice paddy — angrily chanting for American withdrawal. For the crowd of 1,500-2,000 at the rally site below — now standing up and cheering — the scene had a chilling’ scary effect — a final sense of what it must have been like to be Vietnamese in Vietnam in 1970.

“Joe Urgo, GI antiwar activist in Vietnam 1968; former national officer of Vietnam Veterans Against the War; organizer for Winter Soldier Investigation and Dewey Canyon 3, 1971; first Vietnam vet to travel to Hanoi in support of the revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people; member of VVAW (Anti-Imperialist).”

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## **OCCUPATION REPORT**

**Iraqi Leaders Agree:  
Killing U.S. Troops Isn't Terrorism:  
It's “Legitimate” Resistance**



November 22, 2005 By SALAH NASRAWI, The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt -- Iraqi leaders at a reconciliation conference reached out to the Sunni Arab community by calling for a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S.-led forces and saying the country's opposition had a "legitimate right" of resistance.

In Egypt, the final communique's attempt to define terrorism omitted any reference to attacks against U.S. or Iraqi forces.

Delegates from across the political and religious spectrum said the omission was intentional. They spoke anonymously, saying they feared retribution.

## “Not Beheading Innocents Is The Standard Of Justice In The New Iraq”



Last week I had a chilling encounter with one of the monsters responsible for the Murder Inc. units run by Badr and by the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI).

November 18, 2005 Robert Dreyfuss, Tompaine.com [Excerpts]

**It is time to start waving the bloody shirt. There is no longer any doubt that the men that the United States has installed in power in Iraq are monsters.**

**Not only that, but they are monsters armed, trained and supported by George W. Bush's administration. The very same Bush administration that defends torture of captives in the so-called War on Terrorism is using 150,000 U.S. troops to support a regime in Baghdad for which torture, assassination and other war crimes are routine.**

So far, it appears that the facts are these: that Iraq's interior ministry, whose top officials, strike forces and police commando units (including the so-called Wolf Brigade) are controlled by paramilitary units from Shiite militias, maintained a medieval torture chamber; that inside that facility, hundreds of mostly Sunni Arab men were bestialized, with electric drills skewering their bones, with their skins flayed off, and more; that roving units of death-squad commandos are killing countless other Sunni Arab men in order to terrorize the Iraqi opposition.

Even the Washington Post, that last-ditch defender of America's illegal and unprovoked assault on Iraq, says:

“Scandal over the secret prison has forced the seven-month-old Shiite-led government to confront growing charges of mass illegal detentions, torture and killings of Sunni men. Members of the Sunni minority, locked in a struggle with the Shiite majority over the division of power in Iraq, say men dressed in Interior Ministry uniforms have repeatedly rounded up Sunni men from neighborhoods and towns. Bodies of scores of them have been found dumped by roadsides or in gullies.”

The New York Times reports that the Iraqi interior minister isn't all that upset about the torture center.

**Bayan Jabr, "speaking of the prison in an angry sarcastic tone, said, 'There has been much exaggeration about this issue.' And he added, "Nobody was beheaded."**

**So, apparently not beheading innocents is the standard of justice in the New Iraq. And, apparently there may be dozens, scores or hundreds of similar facilities.**

**Last week I had a chilling encounter with one of the monsters responsible for the Murder Inc. units run by Badr and by the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI).**

At a Washington think tank, I met Adel Abdul Mahdi, Iraq's so-called deputy president and a SCIRI official. When I asked Mahdi about reports that Iraqi police and interior ministry squads were carrying out assassinations and other illegal acts, he didn't deny it—but, he said, such acts were merely a reaction to the terrorism of the resistance. "There is terrorism on only one side," he said. "Inappropriate acts by the other side, by the police—this is something else. This is a reaction."

**As far as civilian casualties in Sunni towns, he had this to say: "You can't fight terrorism without attacking some popular areas."**

I also asked him about the Badr Brigade, the Iranian-backed paramilitary force that is the main domestic army propping up Abdul Mahdi's Shiite coalition, he said "they are disarmed," which is patently absurd. He added: "They participate fully in the political process."

**Abdul Mahdi had this to say about Fallujah, the city that was obliterated by the U.S. armed forces a year ago. "It is one of the most peaceful areas in Iraq. I don't know whether the people are happy or not. But it is one of the most peaceful cities."**

**Make no mistake. The gangsters now running Iraq are our creatures.**

**11.20.05 Reuters BAGHDAD - Two members of the Iraqi Islamic party in Buhriz, 60 km (40 miles) northeast Baghdad, were found shot dead in a Baghdad morgue. Relatives of the victims said they were taken by Interior Ministry commandoes about a week ago.**

## **Child's Head Blown Off By U.S. Forces: Major Calls U.S. Troops "Zarqawi Thugs"**

**Reuters television footage showed two dead children in a morgue in Baquba and relatives kissing another dead body on a morgue trolley. One child's head appeared to have been blown off. "They are all children. They are not terrorists," shouted a relative.**

11/21/05 Reuters

U.S. troops opened fire on a crowded minivan north of Baghdad on Monday, fearing a car bomb attack.

"This is a tragedy," said Major Steve Warren, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Baquba, near where the shooting occurred. **"But these tragedies only happen because Zarqawi and his thugs are out there driving around with car bombs," he added, referring to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a militant leader in Iraq.**

Survivors said five members of the family, including two children, were killed and four were wounded.

One of the survivors told Reuters the family was traveling from Balad, a town about 80 km (50 miles) north of Baghdad, to the nearby city of Baquba for a funeral when they were shot at by a U.S. patrol as it approached them on the road.

"As we tried to move over to one side to let them pass, they opened fire," one survivor said. None of them would give their names but said the head of the family was a Mohammed Kamel.

**Reuters television footage showed two dead children in a morgue in Baquba and relatives kissing another dead body on a morgue trolley. One child's head appeared to have been blown off.**

**"They are all children. They are not terrorists," shouted a relative. "Look at the children," he said as a morgue official carried a small dead child into a refrigeration room.**

**"We felt bullets hitting the car from behind and from in front," said another survivor with blood running from a wound to his head and splattered on his shirt. "Heads were blown off. One child had his hand shot off," he said. Of those wounded, two were women and one was another child, the survivors said.**

**It wasn't clear if the U.S. troops involved in Monday's shooting had erected signs telling vehicles to stop.**

**[This is inevitable during an occupation. Any occupation of any country whose people won't stand for living under a foreign military dictatorship, and take the honorable course of resisting it. And if you're looking for who to blame, blame the U.S. Imperial politicians that put the troops into this impossible situation. Once in the situation, this will happen, over and over and over.]**



**An Iraqi man holds a child killed in a shooting while the family was on the way to the town of Baquba November 21, 2005. Witnesses and the Iraqi police said U.S. troops opened fire. REUTERS/Hilmi**

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